

REMARKS

Claims 2-11 and 13-17 were all the claims pending in the application. Claims 2-6, 8-10 and 13-17 stand rejected over prior art. Claims 7 and 11 were objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated by the Examiner as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, claims 2, 5 and 13-17 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, upon entry of the present Amendment, claims 3, 4 and 6-11 will be all the claims pending in the present application.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 2-6, 8-10 and 13-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Japanese Patent Application 2001-243091 to Tetsuro (“Tetsuro”) in view of U.S. Patent Appln. Publ. No. 2004/0156064 to Owen et al. (“Owen”).

Since claims 2, 5 and 13-17 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claims is now moot. Allowable claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of canceled base claim 2 and canceled intermediate claim 5. Since claims 3, 4, 6 and 8-10 are dependent upon claim 7, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable over Tetsuro and Owen at least by virtue of their dependency. Since allowable claim 11 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of canceled base claim 2, Applicant submits that the objection to claim 11 should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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